



# NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

## Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection and Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	IV	Out of Home Placement	12-06-2010
Chapter:	C	Adoption	Revised Date:
Subchapter:	1	General	10-04-2021
Issuance:	200	Adoption Goals	

### Purpose:

This issuance establishes policy and procedure related to establishing adoption goals and when to set an adoption goal early in placement.

### Authority:

- N.J.S.A. 30:4C-11.2, Reasonable Efforts Not Required

### Policy:

#### A) Establishing an Adoption Goal

##### 1) Generally

- i) Where reasonable efforts were required, but despite the offer and/or provision of services, the parents are unable to resume care for their child and the child cannot be returned to his or her parents; or
- ii) When reasonable efforts are not required to reunify the child with his or her parents. See N.J.S.A. 30:4C-11.2, Reasonable Efforts Not required: Criteria, and [CP&P-III-B-2-200](#), and [CP&P-IV-A-3-200](#), Reasonable Efforts to Reunify Not Required, for specific circumstances.

- 2) In order for a child to achieve permanency through adoption, his or her parents' legal rights must be terminated, either:

- i) Voluntarily through a surrender of custody and consent to adoption, or
- ii) Involuntarily through litigation in the Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part.

3) See [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals for policy on setting case goals. See the Safe Measures report, "Adoption Goals (By Goal Type)," which identifies all children in an out-of-home placement during the selected month with a goal of adoption, and groups them by goal type. The report is found under the Concurrent Planning category in NJS.

## **B) When to Set Adoption Goal Early in Placement**

- 1) An adoption goal is set early in a child's placement when:
- 2) A request for adoption planning is received.
- 3) The child is:
  - i) A Safe Haven infant (see [CP&P-IV-C-5-100](#), Safe Haven Infants).
  - ii) A foundling and the initial police investigation has no lead to the identity of the birth and/or legal parents.
  - iii) A newborn and termination of parental rights (TPR) litigation is already ongoing for full siblings.
  - iv) Note: If a newborn is a half sibling, it may not be appropriate to establish an adoption goal. The other parent, not already subject to TPR action, retains rights. Reunification and a relative assessment is required.
  - v) An infant, born into a family where parental rights have been involuntarily terminated for other children, and the circumstances remain the same. In this situation, before a TPR hearing can be held for the infant, a permanency hearing must be held to establish that reasonable efforts are not required for reunification of the infant with his or her birth family.
- 3) A court of competent jurisdiction has determined that reasonable efforts to prevent placement were not required due to risk of harm to the newborn's/child's health and safety and:
  - i) The parent has subjected the newborn/child to aggravated circumstances of abuse, neglect, cruelty, or abandonment. Aggravated circumstances may include, but are not limited to, torture and chronic or severe abuse;
  - ii) The parent has been convicted of murder, aggravated manslaughter, or manslaughter of a child; aiding or abetting, attempting, conspiring or soliciting to commit murder, aggravated manslaughter or manslaughter of a child; committing or attempting to commit an assault that resulted, or could have resulted, in significant bodily injury to a child; or committing a

similarly serious criminal act which resulted, or could have resulted, in the death of or significant bodily injury to a child; or  
iii) The rights of the parent to another of the parent's children have been involuntarily terminated.

**Related Information:**

- [CP&P-III-B-2-200](#), Reasonable Efforts
- [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals
- [CP&P-IV-A-3-200](#), Review of Children in Placement
- [CP&P-IV-C-5-100](#), Safe Haven Infants

**Policy History:**

- 10-04-2021
- 12-06-2010